

across any such report in the regional media over the past two years. This contrast sharply with the Chinese provinces, where local newspapers and other media have often reported cases in which police officials have been prosecuted for torture. The absence of such reports in the XUAR suggests that the authorities either ignore or cover up the widespread practice of torture in the region, or may even sanction its use in the context of repression.

ARBITRARY AND SUMMARY EXECUTIONS

The XUR is the only region of the People's Republic of China where political prisoners are known to have been executed in recent years. As elsewhere in the PRC, the death penalty is also applicable for a very wide range of offenses, including many non violent offenses such as theft, economic and drug related crime.

Since January 1997, Amnesty International has recorded at least 210 death sentences in the region, of which 190 were executed shortly after sentencing—the real figures are believed to be higher. Almost two thirds of the cases recorded were publicly reported by Chinese official sources. The vast majority of those sentenced to death and executed were Uighurs.

These figures indicate that the ratio of death sentences to the population is several times higher in the XUAR than elsewhere in China. The execution rate vis a vis the number of death sentences appears also to be higher.

Most of those sentenced to death and executed in the region are political prisoners. They have been accused of offenses related to clandestine opposition activities, street protests, violent clashes with the security forces, or terrorist incidents. Some of these cases have been publicly reported by the Chinese authorities, but others have not. When they are reported, official sources merely list the accusations against the defendants and do not provide any detail about the evidence against them or the trial proceedings.

Political prisoners charged with such offenses are often tried in secret, under procedures which are reported to be summary. Trials are a mere formality, with the verdict usually decided by the authorities before the trial. Convictions are frequently based on forced confessions and statements extracted under torture. The families are often excluded from the trials and few defendants are known to have had the assistance of defense lawyers. Defendants who appeal against the verdict invariably see their appeal rejected.

In many cases, the authorities have staged "public sentencing rallies" to publicly "pronounce" sentences imposed on alleged offenders. The defendants taken to such rallies have usually been tried behind closed doors beforehand, though in some cases it is unclear whether they have actually gone through any prior formal trial process. Official reports about such rallies show that the judicial process is a mere formality tailored for the purpose of these show trials. They also usually make clear that justice is dictated by political considerations.

Defendants who are taken to public sentencing rallies are made to stand facing the audience with their hands tied behind their back and wearing a placard on their chest, on which their name and crime are written. They are usually forced to keep their head bowed by soldiers escorting them. In some cases, their feet are also chained and their mouth is gagged with a rope or wire tied tightly at their back to prevent them from speaking or shouting. These practices violate international standards on the treatment of prisoners, by which China has agreed to abide, and unnecessary add to the inherent cruelty of the death penalty. Prisoners sentenced to death at such rallies are invariably executed immediately after the rallies.

There have been reports that some prisoners have been executed in public, notably in villages of Ili Prefecture in the west of the XUAR. It has also been reported that the authorities have refused to return the bodies of some executed prisoners to their family, thus preventing the families from burying their dead according to Muslim customs. This increases concern about reports that the prisoners were tortured to extract forced confessions. Often, the families of those sentenced to death have not been informed until the last minute about the fate of their imprisoned relatives. For example, the parents of 23 year-old Jappar Talet, one of those executed after a sentencing rally in Gulja on 22 July 1997, were reportedly informed of his execution just a few hours before it was carried out. They had no prior warning of what awaited their son. After his execution, they requested his body in order to give him a proper burial, but the authorities refused to return the body.

Amnesty International is also concerned about reports alleging that civilians and, in some cases, prisoners have been killed by the security forces or prison guards in the XUAR in circumstances which appear to constitute extrajudicial executions: deliberate and arbitrary killings by government forces acting outside the limits of the law. The Amnesty International reports describes incidents in which such killings allegedly occurred. International law provides that lethal force should only be used when absolutely necessary and in direct proportion to the legitimate objective it is intended to achieve.

Amnesty International is calling on the Chinese government to take immediate measures to curb the gross violations of human rights occurring in the region, in particular executions and torture. These measures are described in the concluding section of the report. Amnesty International is also calling on the government to institute an impartial commission of enquiry to investigate reports of human rights violations in the region and provide a forum for individuals and groups to voice their grievances. Amnesty International believes this should be accompanied by a comprehensive assessment of the needs in education, health and the economic disparities in the region, particularly given China's signature of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1997.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN R. KASICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 20, 1999, I was unable to record a vote by electronic device on rollcall No. 93, condemning the murder of human rights lawyer Rosemary Nelson and calling for the protection of defense attorneys in Northern Ireland. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall No. 93.

HONORING BILL COORS AND THE ALUMINUM BEVERAGE CAN

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to note an important event taking place forty years ago in the State of Colorado. An occur-

rence so remarkable, it forever changed industry and society worldwide. In 1959 the Coors Brewing Company, with the initiative of Bill Coors, began distributing its beer in seven-ounce aluminum cans.

By eliminating the use of steel cans and replacing them with aluminum, Coors Brewing Company led industry and the populace into a world of recycling. Consequently, they saved natural resources, conserved energy, reduced municipal solid waste, and established the infrastructure for today's curbside recycling programs. Highways and landfills once littered with single-use steel cans are becoming a thing of the past. Today, more than 70 percent of aluminum cans are recycled and placed back into the consumer's hands.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to pay tribute to Mr. Coors and the anniversary of his invention. His passion for environmentally-conscious business continues to set a worldwide example.

GIFTS FROM TWO FATHERS

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, some of the finest and most patriotic people that we have in this Nation today are naturalized citizens who came from other countries.

This is true in Knoxville, TN where we have many leading citizens who have come from other nations.

We have an exceptional strong Greek Community and one of the finest of that group is a man named George Consin.

He and other members of the Knoxville Greek Community have contributed in too many ways to list at this time, however, the Knoxville News Sentinel recently published an article telling the story of how Mr. Consin and his wife, Mary, adopted a small boy from Greece many years ago.

This is a touching human interest story that I would like to call to the attention of my fellow Members and other readers of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the Knoxville News-Sentinel, Apr. 11, 1999]

GIFTS FROM TWO FATHERS

(By Kristi L. Nelson)

In 1958, in the small town of Volos, Greece, the young wife of 27-year-old Soterios Kalliakoudas gave birth to a boy, their first child. The mother died of complications a few weeks after the birth, and Kalliakoudas, a shepherd and himself the oldest of six children, didn't feel he could raise the boy himself or burden his parents with another child. After the baby was christened—the mother's dying wish—he was placed with a foster family in Greece and put up for adoption.

About a year later, Kalliakoudas married his second wife, Meropi.

After learning her husband had a son, she told him, "You go and find that baby. I will raise him as my own." The family gathered at the Kalliakoudas' home to welcome George, who was named, in the Greek tradition, after his paternal grandfather.

But Kalliakoudas returned home empty-handed to face the disappointed family. Upon arriving at the foster home, he was told George had already been adopted and taken